

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 19, 21-37, and 40-45 remain in the application. Claims 19, 21-37, and 40-45 are subject to examination. Claim 21 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and entry of the amendment after the final rejection is requested. Claims 40-45 have been allowed.

On page 2 of the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 21-37. Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the Examiner's statement that claims 21-37 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims."

Claim 21 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 19. Claim 21 and claims 22-29, 31-35, and 37, which depend from claim 21, are believed to be allowable.

Under the heading "Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102" on page 2 of the above-identified Office Action, claim 19 has been rejected as being fully anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,004,945 to Tomita et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Examiner has referred to the limitation, “as said first sleeve part and said second sleeve part are guided together”, and has stated that the limitation is merely a functional statement of a desired result with no commensurate structure to insure its function. Applicants respectfully disagree. Claim 19 specifically defines an “anti-rotation element”, and this anti-rotation element is the structure that performs the defined function. Furthermore, the functional language does not merely define a desired result, but rather the functional language serves to limit and further define the anti-rotation element.

The anti-rotation element is a structural element that maintains a predetermined angular position between said first sleeve part and said second sleeve part as said first sleeve part and said second sleeve part are guided together. This limitation is entitled to and is required to be given patentable consideration.

Tomita et al. merely teach that after the first and second bodies 10, 11 are positioned, a screw is used to fasten the two bodies 10, 11 together. The screw is not an anti-rotation element that maintains a predetermined angular position between the first body 10 and the second body 11 as the two bodies 10, 11 are guided together.

Claim 19 and claims 30 and 36, which depend from claim 19, are not anticipated by Tomita et al.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 19 or 21. Claims 19 and 21 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on claim 19 or 21.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 19 and 21-37 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Please charge any fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner Greenberg Sterner LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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MPW:cgm

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